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mitting it to drop to the ground. If a player at last allows it to fall, it is not picked up, but Rąrą'k throws a new one into the ring until all the shuttlecocks are forfeited.

After midnight the men of both rainy season moieties assemble by two fires in the plaza, whither a man named Kái brings them a bundle of unfeathered arrows with balls of maize husk covering their points (pl. 16, *a*). The players step up in pairs (so as to represent in each case both moieties) and try to hit each other with the arrows, which they throw with their hands.

In 1929, during my first visit, when I had not yet come to understand anything of the ceremonial, I had the following experience. An Indian wishing to show me a special favor had some sweet potatoes brought from the plantation for my delectation before the harvest time had been officially announced. In my innocence I eulogized the generous donor before the elders in the plaza, but at once noted the silent, but significant glances passed among them. The donor was thus placed in an ambiguous position and incurred censure, though in deference to me this was not carried too far. However, the culprit was obliged to hurry to the plaza with a bowlful of baked sweet potatoes for the elders, who consumed them and declared the crop ready for harvesting. Similarly I observed that they received two watermelons when the harvest for these fruits was opened.

Another ceremony, hõčwa (= pointed leaf, i.e., sweet potato), is devoted to the sweet potatoes. It always takes place when these plants produce their vines, immediately preceding the ceremony just described of opening the maize harvest. The performers, numbering some twenty, are organized like the festive organizations, but their activities are confined to this single annual appearance at the hõčwa. As in these other societies, membership is inherited matrilineally with the personal name. The lodge is situated on the north side of the eastern half of the village circle. Like the other societies, this, too, has a leader, the hõčwakédeti (grandfather of the hõčwa). He wears hanging down the nape of his neck from a neck cord a feather from the tail of a red arara. The present incumbent is the chief Hąktokót, but the title hõčwa itself belongs to the bearer of the name Rąrą'k, who in this capacity wears falcon down on his body and has a little whistle of Mataco type.[38] The participants also include a precentor and two girl auxiliaries.

The members paint the entire body with white clay, and their faces are marked with two obtuse-angled parallel lines traced with the finger tips with the same pigment. The apex of one of these angles is on the forehead, while its sides extend over the temples; the point of the other angle is on the tip of the nose and its sides are drawn across the cheeks.

The hõčwa actor proper is decorated at sunset. At nightfall a big fire is kindled in the plaza, where the precentor remains waiting. Finally the hõčwa leaves his maternal home and walks to the plaza, where the precentor begins singing to the accompaniment of a rattle, while the hõčwa, with his pinčwę'ipey behind him, sounds his whistle. Thereupon the hõčwakédeti steps out of his maternal house, dances toward the plaza, but immediately returns in order to bring with him the entire membership, who now dance in the plaza with outstretched arms.

Toward midnight all the women and girls come out of their houses and range themselves in groups at the opening of the radial paths leading from their maternal homes to the plaza. The hõčwa march round the plaza from group to group, singing before each of them.

The object of this ceremony is to ensure for each extended family an adequate supply of sweet potatoes, corresponding to the number of its female members.

[38] Izikowitz, Musical Instruments, 233.

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moieties; or that their office dates back to a time when these two types of dual division coincided.

Exit from the age class.—When retiring, the kukrų'tkama, men about fifty years old, whose cycle was completed in about 1903, had dwindled to a membership of eight. Their leaders, as well as the deputy instructor, had long been dead, and the class as a unit played only a subordinate social part: meetings were rare and hardly ever fully attended in the proper site of the plaza; and there was little participation in log races. On the other hand, some of them who enjoyed a certain prestige almost regularly appeared in the council. Nevertheless they had by no means forgotten their kukrų'tkama affiliation.

When the pepyé festival of 1932 closed the initiation of the põhjtîkama, the boys (kra'tą'kama) entering on the northeast side of the plaza, the kukrų'tkama yielded their place to the advancing kaprąnpotîkama. Ten days after the festival all the survivors once more assembled in decorative paint and grass costume in order to run their last log race, in which eastern and western age classes were pitted against each other. Subsequently they did not appear jointly except in the council, with the numerically insignificant survivors of two older classes.

Economic role.—Compared with their socioceremonial and sportive importance, the economic activities of the age classes are quite subordinate. No class as such owns any property; even the place of assembly into which the vų'tę''s house is transformed belongs exclusively to her mother. At the opening of a vų'tę' season the members of a class must humbly ask for this woman's permission before starting their performances there. However, there are two occasions on which the classes engage in economic labors, though not in systematic fashion.

In the first place, they build houses for persons otherwise engaged in matters of public concern. Thus, the two junior classes erected the dwelling of a woman whose husband was a tribal delegate in the state capital. Further, even without such compelling motive the class will help a fellow member put up his house. In 1935 I witnessed the hurried erection of a house by the põhjtîkama, whose deputy instructor's wife was looking forward to her delivery in the near future.

Secondly, age classes assist in harvesting. Since farming is growing in importance every year, the classes play an ever larger part at crop gathering, especially at the anciently nonexistent rice harvest. For meteorological reasons it is essential to harvest this crop as expeditiously as possible; though the prospective beneficiary cannot afford to abandon his crop at this time, he is often expected to attend the commencement of a major festival in the village. For several years it has been customary not to begin the great celebrations before the garnering of the rice, and to obviate delay for the whole settlement, the age classes then help those who are behind schedule. Whoever requires such aid appeals to the councilors to send him the junior age class of his own class moiety. The council decides as to the possibility of such assistance, for the class may already have been requisitioned for other tasks, and communicates the decision to two class leaders. In case of an affirmative reply the young men as a body appear at the appropriate site, for occasional dances accompanied by a number of girls of their own age. Rarely does the class receive any remuneration, consisting in that case of a small share of the crop, which the leaders subsequently arrange to have prepared for all members. As a rule the beneficiary merely feeds her assistants, who, to be sure, by no means overexert themselves, dawdling to such an extent that I was sometimes puzzled to know whether their collaboration was worth while. However, toward the end of the rice harvest they are constantly occupied.

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yarkwá festivals. On these occasions they assemble in a special house lying toward the north on the eastern half of the circumference. However, the Clowns may also be seen singly or in small groups on many other occasions, even in everyday situations; but they withdraw from all the more serious and solemn ceremonials.

In their public performances the Clowns are distinguished by their grotesque make-up as to paint, ornaments, and other paraphernalia; and their behavior is correspondingly absurd. They affect a ridiculous gait and mien and deceive the villagers by harmless lies and false alarms without evoking resentment.

For example, when a boy's ear lobes are pierced, his maternal uncle kills a deer on some unspecified day, dissects it, packs the slices into a basket, and furtively carries this to the plaza. No sooner have the women caught sight of him than they dash out of their houses with knives in order to snatch off a piece of meat in the general scrimmage. One morning when this episode had been due for several days there finally loomed a figure at daybreak that ran toward the plaza carrying a load, which it hurriedly deposited before taking to its heels. At once the women and girls rushed over with yells, fell upon the basket pell-mell, and tore it open, each trying to seize as much as she could of its contents. But this proved to consist of straw, rotten wood, rusty tin cans, and a few rocks. Not only the Clowns, but the whole village laughed at the women standing flabbergasted before their "booty" with their knives and finally they themselves joined in the general merriment.

At certain house-to-house processions the Clowns try to steal food and are sometimes beaten by the women, to everyone's amusement.

At pepkahą'k four of them, with their two girl auxiliaries, enter with face masks of *Lagenaria* rind.

However, the ceremonial activities of the Clowns, as well as of the other organizations are best considered in the description of the festivals.

The Hąmrén

This honorific order comprises five otherwise unrelated groups which share public esteem and ceremonial eminence: (1) the village chiefs (pa'hí); (2) the leaders (mamkyẽ'ti) of the age classes; (3) those girls who are associated with the boys during their initiation ceremony and are called pepkwę'i after the close of the initiation; (4) the women's precentresses (mehõkrepúi); (5) the King Vultures (tamhą'k). Because of the numerical preponderance of the last-named group over the others combined, the term hąmrén is often used as a synonym for tamhą'k; properly it means "recovered from illness."

The first three groups of functionaries are appointed by the council on the basis of personal fitness. This also determines the choice of a precentress, but she is usually selected by the girl's family.

Notwithstanding the respect accorded to the hąmrén, they are not coextensive with the persons of distinction, for the councilmen, who (with the chiefs) rule the tribe and are always approached reverentially with a bowlful of food, are by no means hąmrén *as* councilors, but only through special circumstances. Similarly, the precentor, though far more important than his female colleague, is never hąmrén ex officio.

The natives link the concept of hąmrén with that of something special, superior, more refined, so that they are somewhat distinct from the rest of the population. The head of the King Vultures compared them to the "doutores" of Neobrazilian rustics, who apply the term to all intellectuals, superior officials, etc., irrespective of academic rank. By contrast all other residents are classed as mekakránkra (me,

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851 A child usually does not get its first name until several months after birth; I have seen children about a year old who were still nameless.

551 The significance of the names varies considerably and has nothing to do with the bearer's individuality since they are inherited. Except for Ka'tę'm, which may be applied to either sex, the masculine and the feminine names are distinct. Many girls' names terminate in the feminine suffix -kwę'i. The following may serve as samples:

Masculine	Feminine
Kaðêkum, Star haze	Kaðêkwę'i, Star girl
Čêpką, Bat skin	Pętkwêi, Sun girl
Ropką, Jaguar skin	Pųrãkwêi, Girl of the urucá blossom
Kapêrtųk, Black bacaba	Kôredn, Spilled water
Čątú, Fox belly	Teprã, Small fish (species)
Tepyet, Hanging fish	Paðêdn, Pretty arm
Kukrãčą', Bees' nest	Kukrãyet, Hanging bees
Pądnhi, Arara bone	Te'hôk, Painted lower leg
Kenkum, Mountain fog	Kentapí, Road up a mountain
Kentetet, White mountain	Mîkwę'i, Crocodile girl
Čąrčą, Place for broiling	Kahêrkwę'i, Ground-nut girl
Hąktokót, Falcon (species)	Krãpey, Beautiful head

The first syllable serves as a pet name, for example, Kô for Kôkaipó; Ken for Kentapí; Pądn for Pądnhi.

553 623 The name transfer always takes place in the plaza before sunrise, at the close of the morning dance. The ceremony does not arouse much excitement, but at this hour there are always many people present, especially the councilors. The donor stands on one side, his hąpín on the other, the recipient (or, if he is a small child, his mother or aunt carrying him) in the middle. A councilor or chief steps in front of this group, turning his back to them and leaning on his club; then, while rocking from one foot to the other he calls out the name.

123 553 597 I acquired the name Kôkaipó as follows: The chief Major Delphino Kôkaipó had died while traveling a number of years ago before he had been able to transfer his name, so that it became extinct. This was generally regretted, especially because of the last bearer's popularity. Some time after my arrival, the councilors decided to adopt me into the community as the first non-Indian and availed themselves of this exceptional case to revive the name.

Immediately after the morning dance, chief Kukrãčą' summoned the entire village to the plaza, where the council first held a short conference concerning the affair. Then Kukrãčą', the deceased Kôkaipó's junior brother, took up a position on my right, and Čątú, the dead man's special hąpín, on my left. Chief Hąktokót stood in front of us and all faced west, that is, in the direction of the village half belonging to the complementary exogamous moiety. Leaning on his long burity staff Hąktokót delivered a loud and passionate address, which at that time I was unable to follow, and announced the name. The audience responded with loud shouting and a blast of trumpets.

After the ceremony my deceased namesake's three sisters came up to tell me how glad they were over the revival of the name and my now being their brother. One of them introduced her little son, who at once merrily addressed me as "kedti" (maternal uncle) and to whom I was expected at some future time to convey the name, as I actually did some years later.

552 Strangely enough certain objects of importance also receive personal names, for example, ceremonial lances (krowačwa). When in 1935 I presented the tribe with

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535 body. Sometimes he skips two or three dancers in the row, then turns back a little toward the left, suddenly turning away from the line in order to dash off in long dancing jumps, nimbly and gracefully forming a semicircle, or it may be even a circle, around the girls. Some performers deliberately kick up the sand with the tips of the feet during this maneuver. The precentor's work is very arduous; he drips with perspiration and, notwithstanding minor intermissions, he is usually quite exhausted at the end of the dance. Sometimes his colleague must take over the last part of the dance. In Ponto there were times when more than fifty girls and women were dancing in a row; then one precentor will not suffice, so two appear simultaneously, one dancing before the right wing, the other before the left, their songs and movements coinciding perfectly.

293 534 As noted by Pohl[m] and myself, the youths start their activity not at the first song, but as a rule only at the second or third. Almost always they hold some weapon while dancing—a club or arrow or, it may be, nothing more than a stick. Some make special staves for the purpose, tipping them with some sort of tassel. The dancer grasps the club by the butt, not by the handle. Almost always one or two of the dancers brings along a trumpet, which is either held in the hand or suspended on the back by a neck cord. It consists of (a) a bamboo tube blown by 531 a lateral hole and often decorated with pretty twilling in two colors; and (b) a long gourd resonator set at an obtuse angle (padavą', *Lagenaria* sp.). (See pl. 27, *a*.) Sometimes a cow horn cemented to the tube serves as a funnel-shaped resonator, in which case the instrument is called hõ'hí. (See pl. 27, *b*.) It is blown in short, rapid blasts, especially before the dance and during intermissions, the fundamental and then the overtone becoming audible.

535 The youths, with legs outstretched, gently swing their knees, leaping and dancing in a body toward the girls as long as the precentor dances in front of the female line. But as soon as he turns away to execute his semicircle, the youths likewise retreat up to some thirty meters, leaping and yelling. In the dances held at daybreak they always utter a prolonged shout in chorus when starting a new stanza.

512 535 623 The first dance takes place between 3 and 4 A.M. The unmarried mepantúa and the wantons who sleep with them in the plaza are naturally not slow about taking their places, while the girls and young women who sleep in their mothers' homes and the women's husbands lag behind. The council had charged my hąpín, Čątú, with the duty of tending to the requisite quorum of participants. Accordingly, as soon as the dance had begun he would go from house to house around the boulevard, rousing the truants and sending them to the plaza. He was particularly eager to have me accompany him on this circuit, hence woke me up before the rest, quite contrary at times to my convenience.

Toward 5 A.M. the chanting always grows extraordinarily wild and passionate. Anyone wishing to get a clear picture of Timbira dances ought to watch them at that time of day. Half an hour later the singing abruptly ceases. The precentor plants his rattle in the ground by its tip, turns about, and goes home, whereupon the dancers of both sexes withdraw and hurry off to bathe in the creek. Their place is then jointly taken by the chiefs and elders, who for the most part have already made their appearance to attend the close of the performance.

The second dance is held a little before sunset, whence its name, pųtkammekre, and consists of only five songs. The number of participants is less than at the other dances. At this time the councilors are assembled for the second deliberation of the day. Certain minor ceremonies are customary on this occasion, such as the tasting of cultivated fruits, the presentation of persons discharged from seclusion, etc.

[m] Pohl, Reise, 2:206.

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512 535 623 836

The third dance usually commences after 7 P.M. subsequent to the councilors' meeting. It always has the largest attendance, which includes spectators, especially mothers, grandmothers, and aunts who come to watch their girls dance and later escort them home. As a rule the dance lasts until 9 P.M., but sometimes much later. From time to time Čątú, or sometimes one of the councilors, inspires the performers to greater efforts by admonitions, praise, and protracted shouting. At the close of the performance the married folk and the virgins go home, but the unmarried nepantúa and several wantons usually remain in the plaza at the station peculiar to them. A youth who has a mistress crawls under a mat with her that renders the couple invisible. Some one individual may sing on for himself for a while, then there is complete silence in the village until at 3 A.M. the precentor's rattle once more sounds his summons.

535 171

This mode of dancing seems common to all Timbira. I have seen it not only among the Rąmkõ'kamekra, but also among the Krĩkatí, Pụkóbye, Kre'pụ'mkateye, Krahõ', and Apẹ'nyekra, and the Apinayé manner of dancing is extraordinarily similar.

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In addition, however, there are a number of dances for amusement into which the nocturnal dance for the most part merges, and of these I will describe the knee (mekonkrãne mekrére) and the arrow dance.

The former I observed in 1933 about the time of the terminal ceremony of the pepyé, but it was not related to that initiation and might just as well have been performed at any other time. At 4 A.M. I was awakened by Čątú, who with another man was getting the girls together. Finally eighteen of them in the company of a precentor were squatting on their heels in a circle round a fire in the plaza. Singing with regularity, the precentor on his knees slid in a circle around the girls, at last rigorously shaking his rattle at one of them. Thereupon she also glided about on her knees, moved outside the circle, then backward in a circle in front of the precentor, moving her arms as in a dance, until she had returned to her position. This was repeated by each girl. Once the precentor glided to the right and the girl toward the left in a circle. In the meantime eight men marched in a slow dance step clockwise round the seated group and sang the "ilire" song, which refers to popere, the electric eel (*Gymnotus* sp.). [533]

The arrow dance, a very jolly affair, was performed one evening almost at dusk. The participants were ten girls, a troop of youths, and a precentor. To one side, at the edge of the plaza, were camped the wakõkama in the station proper to their age class. The order of the dances was the customary one. One youth was holding a bow and arrow in his hand, of which the precentor relieved him during the dance, turning them over to a girl. She stepped out of the line, fitted the arrow to her bow while the dancers continued unperturbed, then with stretched bow chased away the quietly watching wakõkama. Next she turned to the dancing youths, pursued them, and at last discharged one of the arrows at a youth, who of course eluded it with agility. Thereupon she returned to her position, while the precentor turned the weapons over to another girl, etc. But when they had once more got into the youth's possession, he suddenly turned toward the girls, menacing them with the stretched bow so that they dispersed with cries of alarm. But presently they reunited, and the play went on. Sometimes the girls shot at the wakõkama without ever hitting anyone, and the young men responded to each shot with a loud "rrr!" Finally they suddenly leapt up and with uplifted clubs chased the girls in all directions. This ended the entertainment.

535 [832] 789

The dances hardly involve any erotic stimulation, but as a by-product some of

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839 Perversions seem to be extremely rare. I know nothing of masturbation or homosexuality. I heard of one youth, somewhat abnormal in other respects, who had cohabited with a calf. The old people declared nothing of the sort had ever happened before. The solitary known case of incest is that described on page 114.

838 A certain Nyõkwỵ'dn, about twenty-five years old (1936), is a marked invert in tendency. He has a high falsetto voice and a more feminine carriage than many a girl. In sitting down he often assumes a woman's posture and displays a striking predilection for feminine domestic tasks. In a photograph of fourteen young men he is the only one to cover his genitalia with a bunch of leaves. He has never had sexual relations with a girl, but I expressly ascertained that he has never been known to indulge in homosexual practices. The omnipotent ceremonial pattern obliges him to join his age mates in all their performances, which he does unresistingly. To his tribesmen he remains an enigma; tradition does not report any comparable instance in the past. But since he does not play truant in any activity, people do not mock him and permit him to live according to his strange inclinations.

WEDDINGS

585 123 596 Formerly the majority of youths married their fiancées in a joint ceremony immediately consequent on the close of the last phase of the initiation festival. The last collective wedding of this sort seems to have occurred in 1913, for none followed the close of initiation in 1923 and 1933. This was probably due to the fact that many of the young warriors were already married. The old people in conversation with me repeatedly regretted the decadence of this usage, and since I encouraged them to insist on its maintenance they arranged with the leaders of the latest initiates, the põhjtĩkama class, to make up for the omitted solemnity. Soon the põhjtĩkama, whom I had joined as a sort of honorary member, came to me gleefully declaring that after all it would be better to adhere to ancient custom. I eagerly agreed, but when I scrutinized the program it turned out that I was booked to wed the thirteen-year-old Kõrédn! This, then, explained the girl's recent solicitude on behalf of my horses; her uncle Pụtõ's remarkably comradely attitude; her elder sister Rąrepri''s invitation to enter the house whenever I passed by. On meeting Pụtõ' the next time I explained that I was not able to get married in these circumstances. He said nothing in reply for the time being, but went to his maternal home and summoned a family council that included himself, his brother, his two sisters, one of whom was Kõrédn's mother, and another old woman. Then he sent Kõrédn herself to invite me to come. Obviously everything had been settled, for he was the only one to speak, saying that Kõrédn had told him she wanted to marry me; that my impending departure was no obstacle; for some day I would return since I was one of them and not of the "Christians"; that then I should find my wife in precisely the condition in which I had left her, as he and his sister would take care would be the case. I expressed regret over the unfavorable conditions, but persisted in my refusal, explaining the inconvenient consequences of grass widowhood for the girl (p. 126 f.). All present remained silent, and I went home.

[623] In the evening and on the following day the matter seemed to be discussed further by the council in the plaza. Then once more there was a family assembly in Kõrédn's home, I being again summoned, with the same result as before. All around me their faces showed displeasure, and Kõrédn was in tears. A few hours later a dozen põhjtĩkama came to me, accompanied by their commandant, a kwỵ'nõ of mine, who told me categorically that in view of my refusal they had dropped the project of a collective wedding. I vainly tried to convince them that my per-

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wakukrá iykapeána." That is, approximately: "Grandfather! Give me a child so that I may be able to eat with him." Then the suppliant spreads the urucú on the inside of her thighs.

Kentapí did not take that much trouble. One morning she was sitting at home against the wall, eating some food from a gourd bowl, while the sun was shining in at the door, directly in front of her feet. She set down her bowl, stretched out both palms horizontally toward the sun, like a begging child, and without getting up said in a low tone: "pa'pám! iymã iykra ñoñgõ! pa'pám iykaprẽ', marwa'té iykrí napá. Ka, iykaprẽne iymã iykrareñoñgõ, vamẽ iypa!" ("Our Father! Give me a child! Our Father, take pity on me, I am sitting here alone, eating. You, pity me, give me a child to eat with me!") On my request she subsequently repeated the words. "I wonder whether he will listen to your prayer?" I asked. "Surely," she answered, "look at Iromkré [Kentapí's younger sister], she also invoked him and is already pregnant." However, it was three years before Kentapí's prayer was fulfilled.

It is a striking fact that the girls of this tribe never have children before, and only several years after, marriage. This is regarded as normal by the Indians themselves, and the above-mentioned Iromkré, who conceived immediately after marriage, was considered exceptional. She was fifteen as a primipara, and her mother told me that she was really too young to bear children. Abortives, if used at all, are exceptional; nor, in my opinion, can the means employed to prevent menstruation be responsible for the lateness of pregnancy in the light of the earliness of sexual intercourse. For this purpose a girl will seat herself on a steppe tree the Neobrazilians call pau pombo (*Tapirira* sp.?) or drink the infusion of the scraped bark of pau candeia (*Cassia* sp.), which is also considered an abortive.

In any case Snethlage probably underestimates the age of mothers in setting that of Ramkõ'kamekra girls who already had a child at barely twelve;[88] or, possibly the child he had in mind was not the offspring of the girl with her. The youngest mother I saw was certainly Iromkré, whose age was between fourteen and fifteen.

OLD AGE

Old people are esteemed; a junior would not venture to address them by name as though they were of his own age, but will always apply a kinship term, calling them kedti or tỵ'ire (grandparent) even if there is no blood relationship. Children and young people never try to converse with their elders unsolicited; even when they have to make some communication to them, they usually remain standing before them in silence until asked to speak. In meeting old people on a narrow path, the younger ones make way to let them pass. I have never heard the frailty of old age derided or mocked. Old Krithỵ', though already hard of hearing and very myopic, would insist on occasionally going to the creek five to six kilometers beyond the village to try his luck as an angler. On these trips he went astray several times on the numerous trails crisscrossing the steppe and was unable to find his way home. Then his grandsons or great-nephews trotted in his wake like hunting-dogs and jubilantly led him back by the hand.

I have pointed out (p. 94) that after a period of some forty years of athletic life all men of an age class ceremonially and automatically drop out of the sports activities to enter the council, which constitutes the real governing body of the tribe since the chiefs undertake nothing without their advice. Further, I have explained by many illustrations that after any ceremonial retreat a person must present himself to this assemblage before being reckoned a full-fledged member of society again.

[88] Snethlage, Reise, 463.

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his presentation always involving the gift of a gourd bowl of food or of a meat pie. At various other ceremonies the chiefs and elders also get meat pies and other victuals in the plaza.

At the close of the pepyé retreat in 1933 I witnessed a ceremony that publicly and formally expressed the principle that old women merit respect as much as old men. Ordinarily there is no feminine counterpart to the men's council in the plaza; but on that day the old women were invited by the councilors to take the male elders' places in the plaza, the councilors themselves withdrawing to a spot on the margin. Then two youths and a girl hauled in a huge meat pie on a mat and handed it over to the old women, who forthwith divided it up and ate it precisely in the manner of the councilors, whereupon they went home.

Among the Timbira the designation "old woman" or "woman" is never applied to men vituperatively.

BURIAL

As stated previously, a Canella, whenever possible, tries to die in his matrilineal home. In 1929 I saw relatives of a very old, sick woman exerting themselves to the utmost in order to get her home alive—an end accomplished only by dashing across the steppe with the patient, who was resting in a makeshift hammock. Several minutes after her arrival she died. In any case a corpse is never laid on a bier except in the maternal home.

A dying person is placed on mats in the middle of the house, with his feet toward the door. Except in the case of a prominent figure in the community no one but the next of kin customarily assembles around the patient. A brief lament uttered by his mother, aunt, grandmother, or sister announces his passing away. Thereupon his maternal and paternal kin, as well as his hąpín, assemble in the house of mourning, but the general lament by all present does not begin until about an hour later, with the preparation of the corpse, during which all sit round it on mats placed in juxtaposition.

The ablutions and ornamentation devolve on the deceased individual's special pinčwę́i or hąpín, but other hąpín also help. They cut his hair, pluck out his eyebrows, smooth his features, and put on his decorations. He is painted with urucú or—if a hąmrén—decorated with falcon down. The corpses of little children are taken into the nearest relatives' laps (including males) and bewailed. Individual lamentations now begin to swell into a chorus of blubbering and a loud, rapid, monotonous chant: "When you were still alive, I was very fond of you, but now I do not want you any more! Don't return here!" The widow and kinswomen of the deceased may weep themselves into a paroxysm of despair and attempt suicide, especially as the corpse is being carried outdoors. Suddenly seizing a tool or firebrand, the mourner may strike herself a terrific blow over the head or back. Or she may run into the space in front of the house and, precisely like her Guaraní and Apinayé sisters,[88] take a header (kamdobép) against the hard ground, possibly breaking her neck. Many years ago a mother, seeing her dead child carried away, is said to have run into the steppe and hanged herself there. Men never commit suicide on this occasion, and generally only the maternal uncle and grandfather are conspicuous in lamentation.

At Konkré's little son's funeral I noted the order in which relatives sat round the corpse: Konkré was at the head, his mother Yątkré and her sister Kentapí at the feet, his wife and one of her sisters on the right side, his mother-in-law and another sister-in-law on the left. A little to one side was seated his father-in-law,

[88] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 151.